

International Coastal Cleanup

Clean waters for clean communities.



2015 Program Report

Introduction

Every September and October hundreds of volunteers in Lincoln and Lancaster County donate their time to keep local waterways clean, healthy and safe. As part of the International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) program, KLLCB organizes volunteers to remove litter and debris from local streams, rivers and lakes. **In 2015, these volunteers removed 1.1 tons of waste from waterways in Lancaster County.**

Waterway cleanups are essential if you enjoy fishing at Wildwood, boating at Branched Oak or camping at Wagon Train. When visiting these sites you can't help but notice bottles, cans and old fishing gear littering shorelines and park areas. Volunteers for the ICC program are asked to complete data cards that record the amount of litter collected. **In 2015, over 12,000 pieces of litter were removed from area lakes and streams, including 1,500 cigarette butts, 1,400 beverage cans and 1,300 plastic bottles.**

The cleanliness of our waterways in Lancaster County can impact rivers and oceans downstream. While it's true the nearest ocean is almost one thousand miles away, 80% of trash found in oceans starts out on land. For example, an empty soda bottle left on the ground can enter storm drains in Lincoln, travel to area streams and rivers and potentially reach the ocean. Even though oceans are not part of our daily lives, trash-filled seas affect the quality of life for people in Nebraska in several ways:

- Air: oceans produce half the world's oxygen and absorb nearly one-third of manmade carbon dioxide emissions.
- Food: seafood is a large food source for millions of people. Ingredients that go in to other foods (such as peanut butter, beer and soy milk) also come from the ocean.
- Transportation: many everyday goods come from other countries and must travel by ship to get here.
- Livelihoods: approximately half the world's population lives in coastal zones, and the ocean sustains millions of jobs. A large tourism and recreation industry is also dependent on the ocean.
- Medicines and cosmetics: ocean resources can be found in everything from shampoos and makeup to medicines that fight cancer and other diseases.

Litter and debris is also harmful to aquatic life. It destroys habitat, harms or kills animals through entanglement or ingestion and transports invasive species.

ICC started in Texas in 1989 and has grown into an annual event that mobilizes millions of volunteers around the world to clean beaches, lakes, riversides and other waterways. In 2014, 561,000 volunteers cleaned up 16 million pounds of trash from 13,000 miles of waterways around the world. The cleanup effort included 2.2 million cigarettes, 1.3 million food

wrappers, 998,000 plastic bottles and 811,000 plastic bottle caps. For complete details on 2014 cleanup activities read the [Ocean Conservancy's 2015 report](#). Data collected from local cleanups are included in this report.

Volunteers

KLLCB organized 16 volunteer groups to conduct 23 cleanups at lakes and streams in Lancaster County. 189 volunteers contributed 482 hours of service for these cleanup projects. Volunteer groups came from several sectors of the Lancaster County community:

Community organizations: Boy Scouts Troop 25, Boy Scouts Troop 49, St. Andrew's Church, Mission Infinity.

Educational institutions: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Union College, Irving Middle School.

Businesses: Time Warner Cable.

Government: FEMA Corps.

Citizens: Five community residents organized cleanup groups.



Cleanup Locations

Cleanups took place at 8 lakes in Lancaster County and 4 locations within Lincoln city limits.

Lincoln cleanups: Holmes Lake (seven times), Dead Man's Run (two times), Oak Lake (two times) and Antelope Creek.

County Cleanups: Wildwood Lake, Yankee Hill Lake, Olive Creek Lake, Bluestem Lake, Pawnee Lake (three times), Conestoga Lake (two times), Branched Oak Lake and Stagecoach Lake.

Cleanup Data

In total, Lancaster County volunteers removed 154 bags of debris from 14 miles and 450 acres of land adjacent to local waterways. A total of 2,255 pounds of garbage and litter were removed from the local environment and prevented from migrating further downstream towards the oceans.

Top Ten Debris Items:

Item	Total Items	Percent of Total
Cigarette Butts	1,541	12.4%
Beverage Cans	1,486	12.0%
Beverage Bottles (Plastic)	1,335	10.7%
Food Wrappers (candy, chips, etc.)	1,250	10.1%
Plastic Pieces (< 1 in)	932	7.5%
Glass Pieces (< 1 in)	664	5.3%
Foam Pieces (< 1 in)	644	5.2%
Plastic Bags (non-grocery)	447	3.6%
Beverage Bottles (Glass)	425	3.4%
Bottle Caps (Plastic)	404	3.3%
Total	9,128	73.5%

Debris Summary by Location:

	Common Items	Fishing Gear	Packaging Material	Personal Hygiene	Miscellaneous	Total
Wildwood	264	35	8	6	45	358
Antelope Creek	1,216	6	52	5	494	1,773
Dead Man's Run	490	1	10	0	373	874
Yankee Hill	549	5	36	0	77	667
Holmes Lake	1192	48	29	3	302	1,574
Bluestem	552	22	14	4	67	659
Oak Lake	578	58	29	1	301	967
Conestoga	653	32	27	2	242	956
Pawnee	2,142	269	118	20	509	3,058
Branched Oak	921	25	21	4	63	1,034
Olive Creek	133	2	1	0	14	150
Stagecoach	298	11	27	1	19	356

Summary

Overall, 12,426 individual pieces of litter were removed from local waterways. The most commonly littered items are typical of activities at recreational areas, including food wrappers and beverage containers. Other commonly littered items are recurring problems that KLLCB addresses through specific programs, including cigarette butts and plastic grocery bags.

The information in this report shows the International Coastal Cleanup program is necessary in the state of Nebraska, as **1.1 tons of waste were removed from waterways in Lancaster County** alone. Efforts must continue to reduce the amounts of litter found at lakes and streams. Improved options to consider for both disposal and education include:



Disposal:

- Continued annual cleanups and recruitment of volunteer groups.
- Placement of equipment such as garbage bins and recycling containers.
- Development of manpower necessary to maintain waste disposal equipment.

Education:

- Signage reminding waterway visitors of proper waste disposal practices.
- Educating recreational users on proper waste disposal practices, including strategies to promote positive behavior change.
- Development of partnerships with agencies that manage area waterways.

Complete Debris Breakdown by Location:

Common Items

	Cigarette Butts	Food Wrappers	Takeout Containers (plastic)	Takeout Containers (foam)	Bottle Caps (plastic)	Bottle Caps (metal)	Lids (plastic)	Straws	Utensils
Wildwood	0	13	4	14	14	5	15	0	0
Antelope Creek	242	152	16	8	28	7	26	39	8
Dead Man's Run	177	85	2	3	30	12	28	14	2
Yankee Hill	45	43	14	4	29	20	26	15	5
Holmes Lake	358	157	62	10	75	18	42	29	10
Bluestem	87	125	5	3	17	24	9	3	6
Oak Lake	76	100	4	4	13	4	10	10	1
Conestoga	68	74	11	13	32	27	7	2	0
Pawnee	404	403	26	42	104	86	38	35	43
Branched Oak	46	81	17	2	42	12	25	22	7
Olive Creek	7	9	1	8	11	4	3	0	2
Stagecoach	31	8	5	6	9	3	11	4	0
	1,541	1,250	167	117	404	222	240	173	84

Common Items (continued)

	Beverage Bottles (Plastic)	Beverage Bottles (glass)	Beverage Cans	Grocery Bags	Plastic Bags (other)	Paper Bags	Cups/Plates (paper)	Cups/Plates (plastic)	Cups/Plates (foam)
Wildwood	35	55	25	30	4	8	3	19	20
Antelope Creek	227	13	221	45	46	4	29	37	68
Dead Man's Run	42	13	20	28	1	2	15	4	12
Yankee Hill	96	43	110	28	17	2	24	18	10
Holmes Lake	114	48	101	26	51	7	19	26	39
Bluestem	61	20	120	5	25	5	7	20	10
Oak Lake	83	18	39	79	81	22	12	9	13
Conestoga	94	78	142	23	30	13	20	9	10
Pawnee	263	64	268	72	145	16	20	28	85
Branched Oak	214	38	329	28	37	2	5	7	7
Olive Creek	29	19	21	6	0	0	11	1	1
Stagecoach	77	16	90	19	10	1	1	3	4
	1,335	425	1,486	389	447	82	166	181	279

Fishing Gear

	Buoys/Pots/Traps	Nets	Line	Rope
Wildwood	0	0	35	0
Antelope Creek	0	0	0	6
Dead Man's Run	1	0	0	0
Yankee Hill	5	0	0	0
Holmes Lake	2	20	16	10
Bluestem	14	3	3	2
Oak Lake	14	1	1	42
Conestoga	2	11	18	1
Pawnee	15	36	204	14
Branched Oak	0	12	7	6
Olive Creek	2	0	0	0
Stagecoach	5	1	0	5
	60	84	284	86

Packaging Material

	6-pack Holders	Other Plastic/Foam Packaging	Other Plastic Bottles (oil, bleach, etc.)	Strapping Bands	Tobacco Packaging/Wrap
Wildwood	0	8	0	0	0
Antelope Creek	4	39	1	4	4
Dead Man's Run	1	1	4	0	4
Yankee Hill	7	8	5	0	16
Holmes Lake	1	15	3	1	9
Bluestem	1	5	7	1	0
Oak Lake	0	16	4	0	9
Conestoga	2	18	1	0	6
Pawnee	3	83	2	2	28
Branched Oak	5	0	3	0	13
Olive Creek	0	0	1	0	0
Stagecoach	1	15	2	1	8
	25	208	33	9	97

Personal Hygiene

	Condoms	Diapers	Syringes	Tampons
Wildwood	0	3	0	3
Antelope Creek	0	2	3	0
Dead Man's Run	0	0	0	0
Yankee Hill	0	0	0	0
Holmes Lake	1	1	0	1
Bluestem	1	3	0	0
Oak Lake	0	1	0	0
Conestoga	1	1	0	0
Pawnee	5	7	0	8
Branched Oak	1	1	0	2
Olive Creek	0	0	0	0
Stagecoach	1	0	0	0
	10	19	3	14

Miscellaneous

	Appliances	Balloons	Cigar Tips	Cigarette Lighters	Construction Material	Fireworks	Tires	Foam Pieces	Glass Pieces	Plastic Pieces
Wildwood	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45	0
Antelope Creek	0	4	5	7	43	0	0	198	41	196
Dead Man's Run	0	13	0	1	18	1	0	140	65	135
Yankee Hill	0	0	0	4	7	0	0	10	38	18
Holmes Lake	0	13	2	2	3	8	0	116	17	141
Bluestem	0	3	13	5	7	6	0	0	12	21
Oak Lake	0	2	18	1	1	0	0	19	139	121
Conestoga	0	0	1	3	12	0	4	31	104	87
Pawnee	1	17	5	10	2	15	1	114	165	179
Branched Oak	0	0	2	4	0	0	1	11	23	22
Olive Creek	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	0
Stagecoach	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	1	12
	1	52	46	37	93	31	6	644	664	932